A Case study

Implementation analysis of labour market policies in Lund municipality

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Abstract

One by one, municipalities around Sweden have started their policies and activities to tackle unemployment. Lund municipality has since 2020 expanded its employment services. This study analyses the employment services implementation in Lund municipality's local government regime. The analysis is done mainly through the lenses of the implementation theory of Lipsky's (1980; 2010) on street-level bureaucrats and Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1989; 1983) top-down theory in the implementation. The data is gathered through interviews with managers in charge of the employment services and a questionnaire survey distributed to the labour market consulter in Lund municipality. The findings suggest that LMC have some discretion, and the results for clients are meaningful for them. There are indications of a shortage of resources in the implementation process, and the requirement for documentation partly interferes with the main work. The possibility for labour market consults to influence policy formulation is limited, but the responsibilities are clear. Finally, there is a lack of collaboration with other relevant actors in implementing services.

Key words: Implementation analysis, Public administration, Municipal government.
Management and Collaboration, Street-level bureaucrats and Top-down theory.

Words:17979

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List of abbreviations

LMC: Labour Market Consults
WISE: Work Integration Social Enterprise
SPES: Swedish Public Employment Services
OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CSB: Statistiska centralbyrån
NPM: New Public Management
SLB: Street-Level Bureaucrats

1-Introduction

Welfare countries such as Sweden, with traditionally high levels of decommodification, meaning dependence reduction of the people's wellbeing on the market, and universalistic and generous approaches to social protection policies, have incorporated new and more neo-liberal measures in their labour market policies (Johansson, 2001; Esping-Andersen, 1990). For example, the activation policies have been the key element in organising the last decade's labour market policies in Sweden and other OECD countries. The effectiveness and form of these policies have been a matter of national and local political debate in Sweden in past years (Calmfors, Forslund and Hemström, 2001:63). In 2020, the municipalities in Sweden paid out 11.9 billion SEK in financial assistance. Payments increased by 2.5 per cent in fixed prices compared with 2019. There are many explanations for why individuals become eligible for receiving financial assistance. The usual reasons for eligibility are unemployment, illness or social barriers of various kinds. In fact, unemployment is the most common obstacle to self-sufficiency; more than half of all adult social assistance recipients were unemployed in 2019 (Socialstyrelsen, 2021).

Moreover, immigrants and individuals with immigrant backgrounds had been one of the target groups of the most activation policies because of their lower participation in the labour market. Aside from the economic aspect of activation policies, employment can enable the integration of immigrants into society (Lundin, 2012; Delmi, 2021). As shown in the figure 1, the unemployment rate in Sweden had an increasing direction in general from 2015 to 2021, where immigrants, particularly female immigrants (more than 20 per cent), had the biggest share of unemployment (SCB, 2022).

(Figure 1.1) Unemplyment. Born in Sweden/foreign born and sex. Source: CSB
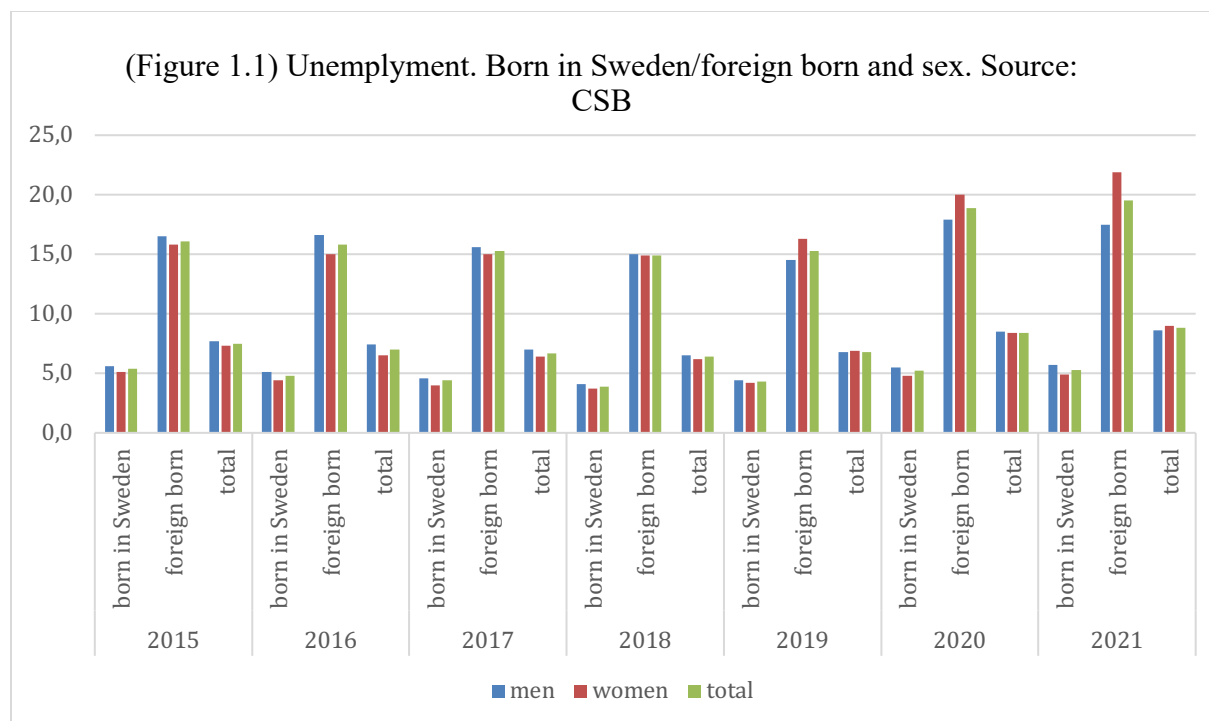
In addition, participants in the municipal labour market policy are, on average, far from the labour market and also have a higher and longer-term reception of financial assistance than the participants in the Swedish Public Employment Service's efforts (Forslund et al., 2019). In 2020, a Swedish state rapport (SOU, 2020:41) indicated that the legal condition gives municipalities the right to act as a supplier of state employment services. In the long run, this can mean an opportunity for municipalities to become more active in the area of labour market policies. But these challenges, such as fighting poverty or reducing unemployment, are difficult to manage within the local public sector. Therefore, the organisational structure and working environment within the public authority responsible for the policy are crucial for the municipality's institutional performance in implementing these policies (Lundin, 2005).

1.2- Labour market decentralisation in Sweden

Labour market policy is primarily a central government's commitment in Sweden, which indicate that the articulation of national policy is centralised. Individuals who are unemployed and are actively seeking work must, regardless of the form of support, receive help from the Swedish Public Employment Service (Vikman and Westerberg, 2017). Nevertheless, the Swedish

municipalities are also involved in labour market policies, mostly towards municipality's residents that taking social assistance (Lundin, 2008).

Firstly, the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES) and the form of provision of labour market services have been the target of political reforms during the last decades. According to the Swedish government, reforms are necessary to make the employment services more effective in providing services to job seekers to find jobs and employers to find the right competence (Swedish Government, 2022). Some of these reforms are, for instance, the service of more digital support and the decision on centralisation of PES in 2019, which means a less physical presence of agency at the local level (SKR, 2020:13). It is also common for the PES to transfer jobseekers or newcomers' participants to activities organised by the municipalities. Examples of these activities are the Swedish language education for adult immigrants and the social orientation course (Arbetsförmedlingen,2 021; Ulmestig, 2005:13). The transfer occurs more when the job seekers do not have good enough language ability to enter the labour market. In these cases, the agency pays the cost of participation in all or partly (Vikman och Westerberg, 2017).

Secondly, the Swedish municipalities have indeed been involved in labour market policy since the economic crisis in the 1990s in Sweden (Ulmstig, 2007; Lundin, 2008). Currently, most municipalities organise their own programs in addition to the PES Services (Thorén, 2012; Salonen and Ulmestig, 2004). A survey in 2015 showed that 273 of the country's 290 municipalities organised labour market programs (Vikman och Westerberg, 2017). However, ways of organisation and providing employment services can differ between municipalities, even if it includes almost the same type of services (Jacobsson, Hollertz & Garsten, 2017; Nybom, 2012; Thorén, 2014). The variations are because of the lack of cohesive management and different municipal prioritisation that is often based on their interests (Lundin, 2008 and 2012). The activation policies in Sweden are influenced and managed at a limited level by the municipality laws (Kommunallagen) and social services acts (Socialtjänstlagen). There is no legal obligation for municipalities to have activation labour market policies; it also means that there are no rights for the unemployed to receive unemployment services from municipalities (Van Aerschot, 2011; Lundin, 2008 and 2012). This is relevant in understanding that municipalities' labour market services can differ from each other, and therefore, every case is unique with its specific elements.

Finally, the ongoing reforms of SPES indicate sharing responsibility for decision-making among several actors, such as municipalities, SPES and private actors. Yet, the main funding comes from the central government (Lundin, 2008). As a result, these reforms bring the responsibility for decision-making in labour market policies and the implementation to the local actors. Some of the arguments for decentralising labour market policy can be summarised as improving local governance, bringing decision-making closer to where problems and individuals are and enabling better knowledge about local conditions (Lundin & Skedinger, 2000). However, there are obstacles and complexity to organising the labour market services regime in a way that it implements the policies effectively. Decentralisation raises several challenges and can disregard nationally set goals. Some of these challenges are the implementer's degree of flexibility in practical policy management, efficiency in services delivery that can result in inequalities between municipalities and the capacity to guarantee public accountability (ibid). Despite the municipalities' importance in the complex area of labour market policies, municipal labour market policy research is very limited (IFAU, 2019).

1.2-Aims and Research Questions

The study aims to firstly analyse the implementation process of labour market services in Lund municipality to develop new knowledge on how labour market secretaries and managers implement the provision of these services. Secondly, the study aims to identify the opportunities and barriers that labour market secreters and managers face in implementing services. In other words, the study does question the capacity and weaknesses of the system in charge of the implementation to work efficiently rather than assessing whatever the program's outcome has successful or not. The destination between implementation analysis and evaluation of a program receives support among others from Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) and Hill and Hupe (2014:118). Furthermore, as mentioned by Elmore (1980:601), generalising the conclusions of a case study on the implementation process is not a seeking aim of implementation studies, which also applies in this study. However, some of the study's conclusions associated with the issue of the local government's implementation of policies, such as employment services, can be generalisable in a limited scope.

Lennart Lundquist (1987) presents three principal questions in implementation studies. Firstly *"Can the actor implement the decision?"* which examines whatever implementer has the capacity to carry out the policy. Capacity has several dimensions; for instance, resources such as rules and routines, money and equipment, and finally, staff and skills. The second question is "*understand implementer what is going to be implemented?"* which explores how the implementer interprets the policy and its goals. In contrast, the policies have ambiguous descriptions and goals. The third question asks about the implementer's will: " Does the implementer wants to implement the decision?". The lack of *"will"* indicates that the implementer actively works not to implement the decided policy. For example, this can occur when the policy conflicts with the implementer's professional values and understanding. In addition, Hill and Hupe (2014:118) mean that the implementation analysis is mostly concerned with how policy is implemented and investigates inter-and/or intra-organisation relationships.

The thoughts regarding implementers' capacity and understanding and inter-organisational relationship, in combination with decentralisation of the labour market and re-entrance of municipalities into the policy area, promote the question of how municipalities have organised themselves in the battle against unemployment. Departing from this, the following questions are asked more precisely to give us a better understanding about the local government's implementation of labour market policies in the case of Lund municipality.

1-What is the municipality's focus and intended outcomes regarding their labour market policies in Lund? And what motivates municipality's involvement?

2- How efficient are the interactions between managers and street-level in the existing work environment regarding implementing the new unemployment services?

The answer to the first question explores the intentions and motivation behind the involvement of Lund municipality in labour market policies. This will serve to gain knowledge about the political context of labour market policy and its creation, which can help to understand the implementation process. Furthermore, the second question investigates the work environment (obligations, barriers, and opportunities), where street-level bureaucrats and managers interact within the (in)formal institutional setting to implement the policies. Cooperation and interaction between the managers and LMC are crucial for providing employment services to the target group.

Managers and LMC experiences can identify the barriers such as conflict and mismanagement in implementation, but also the importance of clear goals and direction on the one hand and practice discretion and coping strategies on the other hand. Semi-structured interviews with managers and a questionary survey from Labour market consulters have been conducted to reach the study's aims and answer the research questions.

1.4-Relevance

The relevance of studying the labour market policies' implementation process at the local government level can be motivated by different aspects. Firstly, this study poses questions that are important both socially and politically (King, 1994). The subject of study, implementation analysis, is grappling with authority and local government, which are elements of the political science field (Hill & Hupe , 2014: 22). But questioning how policies emerged and what it aims for. The effectiveness of translating those into desired changes for target groups is arguably important in society. It cuts across different disciplines such as social science (Ibid:20). Implementing these policies not only affects the municipality's economy due to the cost of financial assistance but also impacts the integration of immigrants into the labour market and society. Due to all this, answering the research questions contribute to producing knowledge relevant to understanding the implementation process of employment services in the local government regime.

To expand, the study by bringing data from both top managers and SLB gives a holistic explanation of the implementation process of labour market policies in Lund municipality. A holistic explanation of the implementation process gives a specific contribution to the literature on implementation research (King, 1994), as well as shading light on the important issue that challenges the Swedish welfare regime.

1.5-Structure of thesis

The first chapter contains a description of the problem area and presents the aim and questions asked in the study. In the second chapter, an elaboration on implementation theory is presented from two different perspectives and choose of theoretical framework. This chapter also includes a literature review focusing more on labour market policies. Furthermore, the choice of theoretical framework is explained. The third chapter continues with the methodological considerations and a description of the methods and materials that have been used. The case selection is elaborated on in this chapter. In the fourth chapter, the collected data is presented and analysed to capture the central pattern of the implementation process and the barriers and opportunities in providing service. Finally, in chapter five, the conclusions are drowned from discussion in the previous chapter, and suggestions for future research are provided.

2-Theoretical framework

Studies about policy implementation have shown the need to be careful with definition and using terms (Johannson, 2015: 259). The following chapter describes the meaning of policy and institution and implementing theory from different perspectives. An overview of the previous studies ends the chapter.

This study analyses the implementation of employment services in the local government regime in Lund municipality. It analyses the organisational model behind providing labour market services and the barriers and opportunities perceived in implementing them. The chapter begins with a section on policy and institution to understand the terms and how it matters in the implementation process. In the second step, implementation theories are presented, followed by a description of Lipsky's (1980; 2010) theory on street-level bureaucrats and Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1989; 1983) top-down theory in the implementation. These theories will analyse the barriers and opportunities in the implementation process and the effectiveness of interaction between LMC and managers. While the choice of Lipsky (1980; 2010) and Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) may lead to the neglected work of many other scholars (For example, see, Sannerstedt, 2001; Hupe, 2016; O'Toole, 2000), it provides a useful discussion of the theory. Secondly, this chapter provides an overview of the literature on organisation and implementation, mainly concerning employment policies in the local context.

2.1-Policy and institutions:

The public sector has been dominated by rationalisation and restructuring since the late 80s. Simultaneously a new-liberal perspective on welfare management has emerged. These ideologies, among other things, advocated for market-oriented (similar to the privet market) and decentralisation of the public sector in order to increase efficiency. These reforms are labelled as New Public Management (Hall, 2011:29). According to NPM-trend, an operational-depended on the model of organisation can be established in the public sector to understand how these organisations would behave. Which produces the opportunity to manage the public by the

rationalise models. However, the organisations are in the process of the organisation constantly; this is because the NPM trend doesn't see any origination as the perfect one (Ibid: 30-32).

Moving on to the policy, as with many other social and political science terms, there is no universal definition of "Policy". But a vague definition presented by Heclo (1972:84) is one that some scholars agree on, which is "...the term policy is usually considered to apply to something "bigger" than particular decisions, but smaller than general social movement" (ibid). More accurately, policies contain goals and build up the first steps of reaching these goals (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973). Reaching those goals in policy might be done by other than the one that has overseen policy formulation (O`Toole , 1995: 45-48). For example, the managers at a municipality that develop and form the policy in the labour market may not be involved in its implementation. Still, it is the LMC that implements policies.

Moving on to the definition of institution, it doesn't only mean rules but also includes unregularised activities such as informal rules, routine, tradition, and organisation forms (March and Olsen, 1980). In particular, the Swedish local government insinuations, both at the local and national levels, are heavily influenced by bureaucratic logic (Styhre, 2006:6). The bureaucratic logic is characterised by routines, efficiency, stability, transparency, and predictability (ibid). Institutional setting is so central in the implementation of a policy that it can determine which directions that policy can take; by carrying out the burden of transforming general decided policy into an array of rules, routines, and social processes (O'Toole, 2003:2). Here a lack of institutionalisation of the policy's element in the early implementation stage means that the formal organisation model cannot capture those key elements and develop a suitable implementation method (O'Toole, 1995: 44-46). The influence of the institutional setting in implementing the policy makes it a central aspect of the implementation analysis. A social program as the employment services needs to be implemented consistently with the organisation's institutional design.

2.2- Implementation:

The implementation studies can be located in the field of public administration studies; thus, as Peters and Pierre (2003:1) wrote, "the principal activity of public administration is implementing laws". The implementation concept is a relatively new study issue as a separate subject. However,

Woodrow Wilson, already in 1887, argued that the relationship between politics and administration must be separated, with the reasoning that the administration's mission is to implement political decisions effectively. Even though Wilson lifted implementation so early, research on implementation became important for studying the effectiveness of public policy in the 1970s (O'Toole 2000). The classic study from Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), "Implementation - how great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland", is seen as the beginning of the implementation's studies. They differentiate between the concepts of "policy" and "implementation" in their study about unemployment and poverty reduction.

Implementation in general can be defined as an early phase of a policy in the public sector (Hill and Hupe,2014), which indicate carrying out, accomplishing, fulfilling, producing, and completing the policies (Pressman and Wildavsky,1973). The implementation phase begins when a decision is made to establish new policies in the sectors. However, implementation processes are complex, and this complexity can result in the failure of policy. Therefore, a policy needs some modification and development to become a practical reality in the sectors (Hill & Hupe, 2014). The complexity in the implementation process demands for a more holistic perspective for studying it, than what one single theory can provide. Hance, using two traditional preceptive are the street-level bureaucrats and the top-down, to analyse the implementation process, provides valuable insight and help to capture a more holistic perceptive in analysis. The street-level bureaucrats' perspective, from Lipsky (1980), focuses on the implementation's street-level bureaucrats. In contrast to the bottom-up model, the top-down is associated with a straightforward policy translation into action (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1989).

2.3-Street-level bureaucrat's approach:

Street-level bureaucrats, here the labour market consulter, are central actors in the implementation analysis in this study. They have also been favourite subjects of study for several scholars (For example, see, Tummer & Bekkers, 2014; Hill and Hupe, 2009; Sandfort, 2000). Between them, Lipsky (1980) is a central figure in the implementation research. He defines street-level bureaucrats as public service agents who interact with citizens directly (Lipsky, 1980:3). Street-level bureaucrats implement policies by translating policy documents into practical activities,

which gives them a crucial position in carrying out policies (Lipsky, 2010: 15). Lipsky claims that public agents with a high occupations professionality, as labour market consulters, influence and determine how a policy is implemented in practice. This influence can take control of the implementation process in detail, challenging for the politician or managers that initiated and formulated the policy (Ibid, 1980:188). Discretion in street-level bureaucrats' daily work means that they can make decisions based on their perceptions and assessment. The discretion gives street-level bureaucrats the ability to formulate the organisation's operational model and determine the quality and nature of the services provided (Ibid:14). According to this perspective, the role and importance of street-level bureaucrats mean that the policy implementation should rather be studied at the lowest level, at the street-level bureaucrats (Ibid:188).

However, a more controlled organisation in the public sector demand for more documentation. The documentation requirement means that the street-level bureaucrats must report back to regulatory agencies and document their work. They are also restrained by their organisations' rules, regulations, and norms (Lipsky, 1980: 4, 13-14). The documentation demand and organisational rules mean that even though workers in the welfare sector may have discretion in carrying out their tasks, they are still under the influence of state agencies. The work of street-level bureaucrats is in some extent paradoxically.

On the one hand, the individual cases in their work require some freedom in decision making, but on the other hand, the rules shape their work to reach the policy's objectives. The strategies the street-level bureaucrats use to cope with this paradox determine the policy they implement. SLBs can develop certain practice routines to manage their daily jobs (Lipsky 2010: xi-xii). Lipsky viewed this as they not only influencing the policy, but he went forwards and claimed that their decisions are part of the policy structure (Ibid: 12-13).

Hence, these actors deliver policy outcomes, actively shape them by the rules, and allocate resources (Lipsky, 2010: xii, 3). Street-level bureaucrats, here the LMC, represent an instance of policy delivery in their encounters with the citizens, in this case, job-seeker. The quality and effectiveness of the LMC services affect people's lives and opportunities (Lipsky, 2010: 4); it is crucial to explore the preconditions for these actors to implement policy. The lack of resources, such as staff and time to implement the policies, can be an obstacle for street-level bureaucrats and

prevent the highest performance efficiency. But also, the street-level bureaucrat's experiences and skills are crucial for implementing policies. Lack of experience in training and good competence might result in some difficulties in the implementation process (Lipsky, 1980:29-31).

To sum it up this far, the work of labour market consulters can be divided into three parts, where the first part includes the organisation's laws and guidelines. The second part includes the client's expectations and the interaction between the client and the labour market secretary. The last part includes the LMCs frames of reference, room for manoeuvre, and opinions on who is entitled to assistance. These three parts can create one understanding of the LMC's decision-making and why they apply coercion to the extent to which they do. Three key dimensions for successful street-level policy implementation have been proposed: discretion, coping with documentation demand, and meaningfulness (Lipsky, 2010).

2.4-Top-down approach:

In contrast to Lipsky (1980), Sabatier argues that the implementation and street-level bureaucrats' work can be managed from a top-down perspective. The core element in the top-down model is the belief in decision makers' capacity to manage the implementation process. Decision-makers and managers can, by using the available management methods, govern and control the process of implementation, which happens vertically (Sabatier, 1986). Here the politicians and high-ranking official managers are the actors deciding the implementation direction. The street-level bureaucrats, here the LMC, then exercise the decisions (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979: 489-92, 503-4).

Furthermore, the implementation of public policies is understood as a result of the demonstration of the following three main categories: (1) The tractability of the problem being addressed by the policy, (2) The ability of the policy to favourably structure the implementation process and (3) non-statutory variables affecting implementation. Problem tractability can be solved by having a smaller, more definable target group. This makes mobilising policy and compliance easier (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980:544). According to this approach, the policy goals' structure can determine the implementation process's performance. Hence, it's important to analyse the clarity of the goals and information regarding the implementation (Ibid). Therefore, the formulation and design of policy and the policy process tend to be studied.

In order to structure the implementation process sufficiently, in terms of financial and personal administrative resources, it is necessary to address the target group, monitor compliance, and increase the capacity to comply (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980, 545). And hence, the more personal resources per project expanded for the implementation, the easier it is to implement the policy successfully. A successful implementation is simplified if it is delegated to institutions supportive and committed to the policy goals (Ibid, 546-547). This can be seen as a clear advantage of distributive policies compared to regulatory agencies, where actors might not be willing to constrain successful development in their jurisdiction.

Another distinct claim made by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980: 542) is that the greater the public and political support for the policy, the lesser the potential for conflict and opposition. Something else to consider is the commitment and ability of the personnel and other actors responsible for the implementation, which is seen to could be managed by the managers. This factor can be regarded as managerial competence that may compensate for weaknesses in the implementation process (Sabatier,1986). It could be said that the top-down emphasis upon change so that actions ultimately resemble the initial policy. This requires that the decision-maker has a clear logic in the implementation and a well-defined area of responsibility so that no ambiguities and misunderstandings can arise that slow one down or hinder one implementation process. The suitability of the regulation and policy elements gives agents a pathway to implement the policies' purposes into practical work (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980: 542). In other words, the following criteria are required for successful management from a top-down perspective; a) Clear and consistent objectives, b) Suitable for regulation and policy purposes, c) Implementing process legally structured to enhance compliance by implementing officials and target groups, d) Committed and skilful implementing officials (ibid).

2.5-The Synthese perspective:

The synthesis perspective on implementation means providing a perspective from two sides of theories. From both the top-down and bottom perspectives, it implies that both theories stand for important aspects of implementation. A compilation of perspectives can sometimes be necessary for a holistic picture of implementation (Johansson, 2015). Due to the differences in the content of policies, different approaches are also required to look at the matter (Ibid). In cases where a policy

needs compliance with its activities to perform it, it may be beneficial to also look at the bottom-up perspective. In other cases, it may be the other way around that those affected by the policy need to look at the top-down perspectives, for example, in legislation and policymaking. Then there is probably not much room to adapt the policy while using just one approach. A preferred alternative to these either-or choice situations is synthesising the best features of the two approaches to gain insight from both theories in understating the implementation process.

2.6-Previous study:

Many studies deal with New public management and the public sector, one of them is the study of management reforms, changes in organisation and trends of bureaucratisation done by Patrik Hall (2012). Hall means that public sector expansion has led to the management bureaucracy has developed and therefore sees as a must that the public sector should be managed and controlled in new ways. Management-bureaucracy is a modern management trend where the agents attend to admiration, planning, accounting, follow-up and documentation (Hall 2012, 14-24). Different ideas of networking and decentralisation in the management-bureaucracy result in a displacement of bureaucracy and collaboration (ibid:69). Moving into the term collaboration, it has been described as a cross-border action between several actors in order to work together for the shared goals or shared meninges (Lindberg, 2009:5). Lindberg means that collaboration is a universal solution where organisations need each other to manage processes that are complex. One of the reasons for collaboration in the labour market services is the complex character of the problem.

During the last decades, implementation research has been growing. Implementation and public administration literature have identified many structural and organisational variables that may affect policy implementation (O'Toole, 1997; Sandfort, 2000; Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989). The more recent researchers believe that implementation is an important part of the political process, giving legitimacy to the authority in charge of carrying out services or objectives (Hill & Hupe , 2005: 68- 70). In the case of labour market policies, an "activation" approach can promote integration in the labour market through strong service in work requirements skills combined with control and sanctions opportunities if the program participants do not do as they supposed (Kvist and Overud, 2015).

According to De Koning (2001), improving the policy effectiveness of services in activation policies represents another driver for institutional reform. Martin Lundin (2018) tracks the changes in the organisation of the labour market in Sweden in his study and claims that the labour market in Sweden has been the target of decentralisation and, once again, centralisation. Yet the evidence to support this relationship is thin. Changes in the institutional framework don't significantly affect the effectiveness of providing activation policy (Ibid). In a study by Alone and Ulmstig (2004), their mapping showed that the proposition of municipalities that organise and provide labour market services has increased from 62 per cent in the middle of 1990th to 83 per cent in 2002. The study didn't find any clear pattern whatever which kind of municipalities conduct activation policies and neither which kind of action policies are used (ibid).

An analysis of decentralisation of activation policies in the labour market by Lundin and Skedinger (2000) in Sweden shows that greater involvement of municipalities in decision-making in the labour market policies only results in more local initiatives. But a mismatch between the degree of decentralisation and the authority responsible for carrying out the places can negatively affect the implementation of these policies. There is always uncertainty about how the new responsibilities will be assumed and managed once decision-making is passed from one government level to another. A Study from Jacobsson, Hollertz & Garsten (2017) draws attention to the importance of the local context, with different political interests than the national one, which means that labour market activation policy at the local level cannot be understood based on the national priorities. An example of local variation is reflected in a survey of municipal labour market measures in the Gothenburg region (Bergström , 2014), which shows that a majority of the labour market units, in almost two-thirds of the municipalities, were organised by the social welfare department. A common perspective in such an organising model is that the labour market policies represent an area that may be left behind, mainly because activation is not a regulated responsibility of the municipalities. Demands for savings in the administration's budget often hit the labour market activities in different ways due to regulated parts of the social services, as financial assistance being given priority.

More particularly, the organisation of labour market measures is described with the help of two ideal models of carrot and sanctions by Dahlberg et al. (2013), Nybom (2014) and Thorén (2014). The job activation model is most often linked to municipal activation reminiscent of poor

care. It is characterised by control and sanctions instruments to increase job-seeking activities and discourage income support or finding work before the activation action is started. The resource activation model, the carrot model, emphasises education and work experience from the regular labour market and is usually associated with state activation to facilitate the establishment of the labour market where sanctions and control have a subordinate role.

Considering the work environment of street-level bureaucrats, a quantitative study using questionnaire surveys from Tummers and Bekkers (2014) found a positive effect between street-level bureaucrats' discretion and their perception of services' meaningfulness for the clients. The discretion and meaningfulness are conditions for a more willingness to implement the new intended policy. Street-level bureaucrats willingness to implement the policy improve when they see their work as meaningful for their clients. Furthermore, Tony Evans (2011), in his study of social secretaries, divides the street-level bureaucrats into two groups. The first group see guidelines in policy as a tool to expand their autonomy. The other group perceive the guidelines as a limitation of their autonomy.

Finally, the role of collaboration with SPES in the implementation of local labour market policies is discussed in several studies (Danermark, 2005; Lundin , 2008; Panican and Ulmestig, 2021). The SPES regulated obligation in the labour market policies, and also the local government's limitation in resources emphasises the need of municipalities to seek collaboration. In an article by Jacobsson, Hollertz and Garsten (2017), argues that the cooperation structure of that municipalities in activation policies differs from each other, which indicates collaboration between SPES and municipalities is negotiated in the local context. According to a study by Panican and Ulmestig (2017), a crucial aspect of activation policy is the corporation between the municipality and the relevant actors in the local context, where the PES is a natural partner because of its central role in the labour market. Municipal Actors point out the benefits of collaboration between the SPES and municipalities. However, this collaboration is challenged by the reform that SPES faces.

3-Method & Materials

The following chapter describes the combination of methods and materials used for the study. The case selection, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaire survey are described in the following. Finally, the chapter contains an ethical discussion and a critical examination of the method.
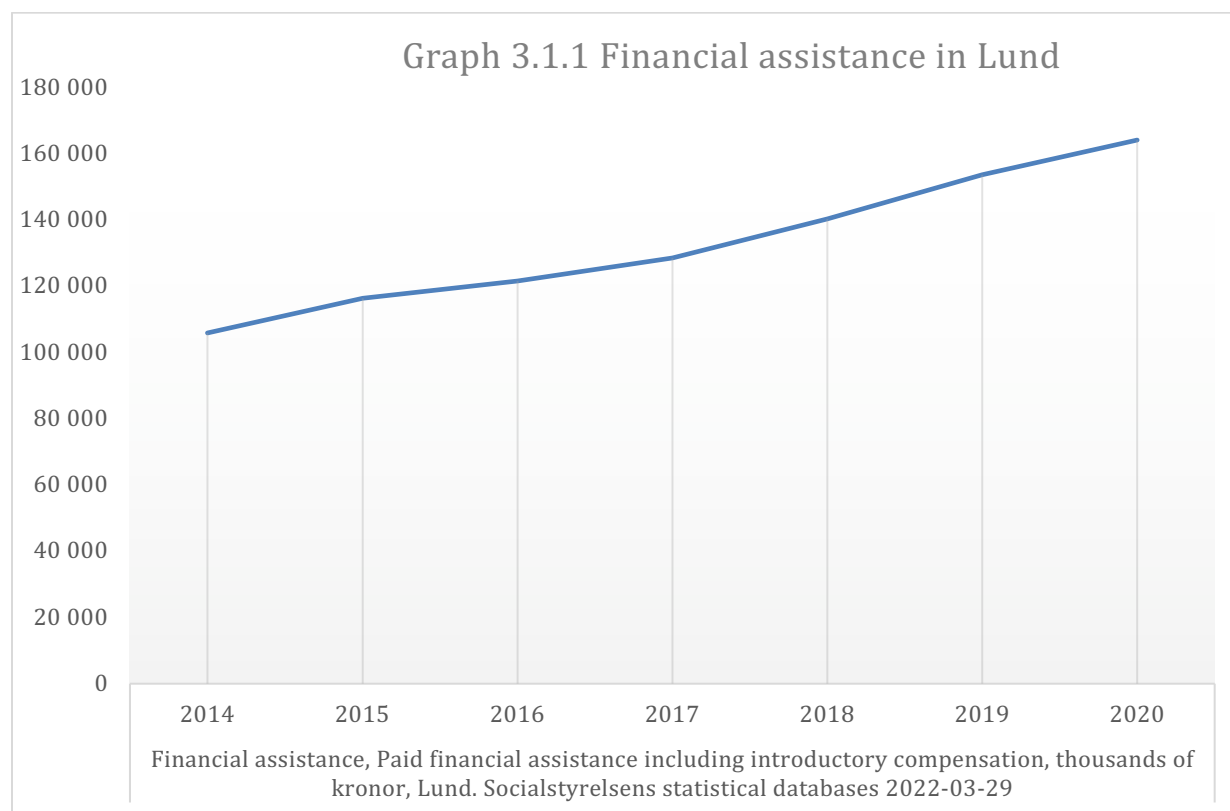
To address the aim of the study, a single case study is conducted, which focuses on the chosen case rather than trying to generalise the results beyond the data. This being said, a limited generalisation of results regarding local governments' policy implementation is drawn, even if this is not the main aim of the study. The implementation theories, bottom-up and top-down (see Theoretical framework chapter), guide the study and its structure. A theory-guided single case study with the aim to understand the implementation process fits into the basic typology of idiographic case studies (Levy, 2008:4). A single case analysis allows the study to be in detail, which is suitable for a complex phenomenon such as implementing unemployment services and policies (For exampel see Pressman and Wilavsky, 1973; Sabatier, 1986: 22; Hill & Hupe, 2014: 131).

Implementation studies are not restricted to any specific type of data producing and analysing; this means that data can be produced by both qualitative and quantitative methods or a mix of them. In this study, the empirical evidence is collected by conducting semi-structured interviews with official managers in the Lund municipality, giving the study deeper insights into organisational structure and policy intention. Furthermore, statistics from a questionnaire survey distributed among labour market secretaries analyse the street-level bureaucrats' perspectives and work environment in the implementation process.

3.1-Case Selection: Why Lund?

Having an internship at the social department of Lund municipality during spring 2021, has contributed to gaining information and having opportunity to observe the development of policies of the employment services. Simultaneously, it has provided the necessary network for carrying

out the study. Despite the already existing knowledge about Lund's unemployment activities, Lund has turned out to be a great case for studying the implementation process of labour market policies at the local government level. The policies are relatively new in terms of its organisation and the employees working directly with the employment services, and also the unemployment rate has increased slightly since 2015 (https://arbetsformedlingen.se/statistik/sok-statistik). In that sense, the implementation process of the labour market policies is highly relevant and on the local political agenda. This, however, is not the main reason why Lund is a suitable case for the study of the implementation process of labour market policies. Rather, it is a fact that the municipality is taking responsibility for the activation policy while the SPES is reorganising and getting the administrative role. On the one hand, Lund appears to be a municipality with a good economy, but on the other, it appears to be rather restrictive in spending on labour market activities.

Graph 3.1.1 Financial assistance in Lund

Financial assistance, Paid financial assistance including introductory compensation, thousands of kronor, Lund. Socialstyrelsens statistical databases 2022-03-29

The increase in the unemployment rate in Lund has reflected itself in the growing spending on financial support. Despite this, the dominant political view Lund had seen the employment services as a PES and states responsibility, where municipality limited its activities to the regularised obligation in social services., This direction had been arguably logical in a period of low unemployment rate in Lund, which can also be seen in the relatively low spending on the labour market services (See figure 3.1.2). The paradox of the increasing cost of financial support and the low budget for the labour market services is interesting for several reasons. On one side, the cost of financial assistance in Lund (See figure 3.1.1) has increased rapidly during the last years. And on the other side, the cost of labour market activities (See figure 3.1.2) is very low in Lund concerning other comparative municipalities.

In a statistical report from Swedish municipalities and regions (SKR, 2020), the most job seekers (47 per cent) that receive services from municipality employment services are the ones that take financial support from the social department of the municipality. In the case of Lund, the number is high as 95 per cent (SKR, 2022). The high number of individuals with financial support in a set employment program, which can be seen as underfinanced regarding the comparative municipality, makes implementing those programs important for the cost of the municipality's financial assistance, which is growing. Due to all of this, the case of Lund becomes a potential site of implementation analysis, in which the labour market policies are not crucial for the individuals receiving them but also for decreasing the cost of financial assistance. One could argue that the relationship between labour market spending and the cost of financial assistants could be studied in all other municipalities; but implementing Lund's relatively new indented employment services became unique when considering the low sending on those services.
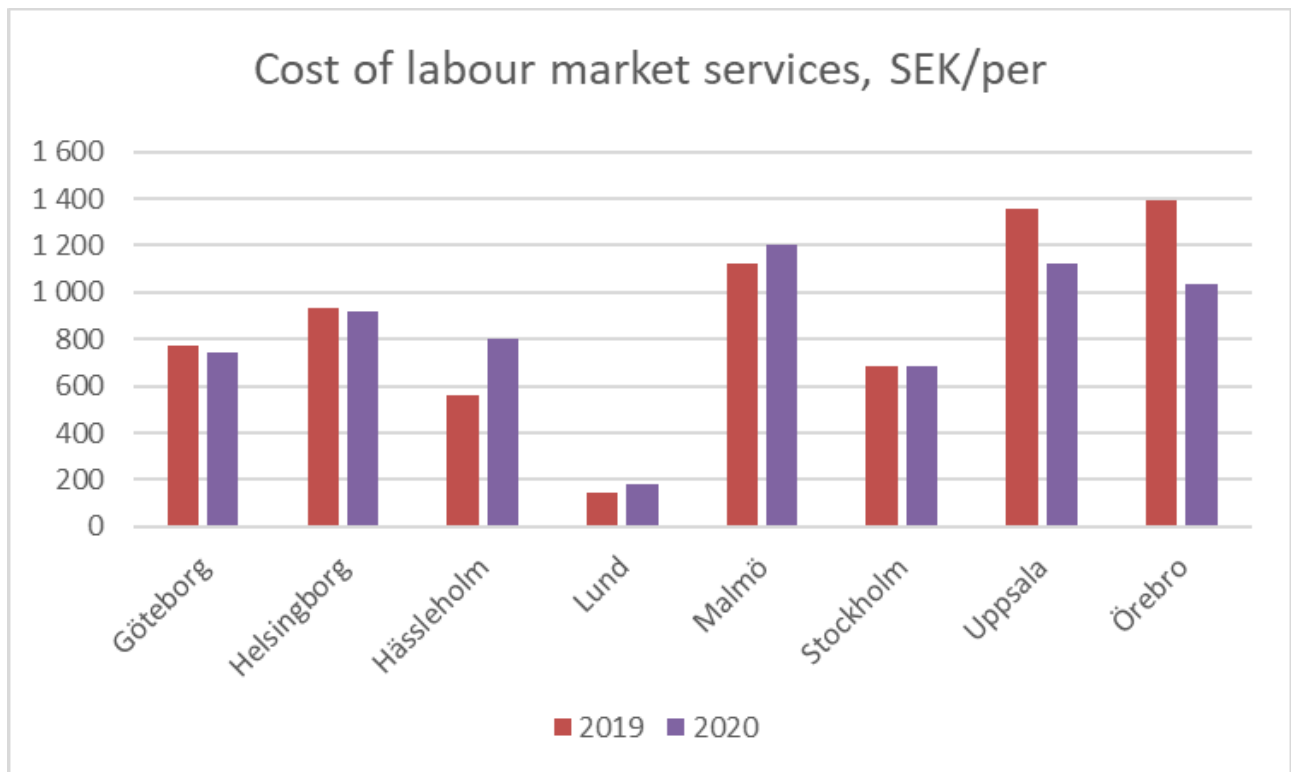
Figure 3.1.2. Cost of municipal labour market services in, Swedish Kroner per person (https://www.kolada.se,Kolada 2022).

3.2-Ontological and epistemological positioning

Before starting with the research design, it is relevant to establish this research's ontological and epistemological position; thus, this positioning can influence the scientific methods (Bryman, 2018:746; Lowndes, Marsh and Stoker, 2018:179). The purpose of the description is to understand the methodological choices and create a better ground to grasp the research as a whole. As Bryman (2016:636) remarks, the epistemological and ontological positioning does not need to be associated only with qualitative or qualitative methods. In this study, I use the critical realism approach, as the middle point of positivism and interpretivism perspectives. Critical realism shares an ontological standing with positivism in aspects of foundationalism, meaning that there is an external reality in the world independently of our understanding of it; and that the researcher can make causal statements of social phenomenon (Bryman, 2016: 23-24).

Regarding critical realism, the structure of the work environment of both managers and LMC can constrain and facilitate the implementation of employment services. Moreover, the critical realist approach allows for the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods (Lowndes, Marsh and Stoker, 2018:194). However, the quantitative approach is used here to assess the structure LMC and managers are working within to implement the labour market policies.

According to the critical realism, the best way to reach an understanding of implementation processes and the work environment of LMC and managers is by analysing the reflection of bureaucrats and managers operating in the context of providing employment services (ibid).

3.3-Research design

This study uses the mixed model of two types of data: interviews and questionnaire surveys. The collected data through the qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaire surveys) have equal priority. In both methods, questions are central, where the knowledge is produced by answering those questions (Floyd & Fowler, 1995:1). However, it's not the answer itself, but the information that is provided by answers about implementing labour market policies that is interesting. Using two types of data for collecting and measuring data is a strategic way to fill in gaps, as one type of data can compensate for what the other type lacks and add more information. This expands and strengthens the study's conclusion. The purpose of interviews with high-ranking manager officials is firstly to bring in information about the municipality's overall intention and wanted outcome with the labour market policies. Secondly, the interactions with the labour market secretaries and the work environment to provide unemployment services will be discussed. The standard in designing the questions, both in interviews and questionnaire surveys, is that all respondents understand it and provide the information needed for the study.

Therefore, the chosen methods are deemed equally suited to answer the research questions as they help bring the information needed to compare the result and form holistic data (Bryman, 2016:638). The two methods and their considerations are elaborated on in the following sections. Both questionnaire survey and interview guide were formed simultaneously, and both dealt with the implementation process.

3.3.1-Interviews:

Using qualitative interviews as the first part of a research method conduce toward obtaining needed data to understand how labour market policies are raised and are implemented. According to Esaiasson et al. (2017: 235), the conversation is one the most common ways to collect research material. Interviews allow more space than a questionnaire survey to interact with the interviewees and follow up the unexpected and interesting points in the conversation. Nevertheless, conducting interviews with a bigger population had not been operatable due to limited time and space in this thesis. The interviews in this study were semi-structured, meaning that questions had been prepared beforehand and that follow-up questions were asked during the interview, depending on the given answers (See Appendix 1). When there is a specific aim behind conducting interviews, as in this case, a semi-structured type of interview with questions prepared beforehand is suitable (Bryman, 2018: 564).

The interviews are divided into different categories by Esaiasson et al. (2017: 235–236), namely information interviews and respondents' interviews. The interviews in the information interviews contribute information about how the studied issue is implemented and the pattern and central aspects that the study wants to explore. In the respondents' interviews, the individuals themselves are the subject of study (ibid: 235– 236). In this study, the informative interview method was used. Thus, the interviewees are not the subject of the study. The purpose of the interviews had been to capture the central aspects and provide a holistic understanding of the labour market policies implementation process.

Thus, the criteria for the choice of interviews have been their position, and it had been important for the validity of the study to present them and their position. The interviewers' choice was based on what those individuals mean when aiming to understand labour market policies and their implementation process. Another reason for choosing these managers for interview is to be able to answer to second research question aim to analyse the interaction between managers and SLB. Therefore, four officials' managers currently working in the social department of Lund's municipality have been interviewed. Two of interviewees were high ranking official that were directly involved in formulating the policy and two other interviewees were each first line manager and employees at the resource and development unit that have been involved in the labour market

policy. This construction of interviewees gives the opportunity to have insight from a boarder range of management preceptive. The assumption for choosing managers is that they have been central in formulating the policy and managing its implementation. Their involvement in the policy formulation and managing the department's labour market policies are essential for answering the research questions. Name and position of interviewees are presented in the following table.

Name	Position
1-Johan Larsson	Development Manager/Deputy Social Director
2-Jessica Persdotter	Deputy director and director of labour market policies
3-Ann-Charlott Johansson	Unit Manager at Social Department
4-Pia Forsberg	Development secretary

The four interviews are semi-structured, in-depth, about 45 minutes, and questions and topics will depart from the institutional and implementation perspective. The interviews began with introducing myself and introducing questions to the interviewees and continued with a dialogue coordinated by structured questions. The questions dealt with the interview's work and practices as official managers responsible for labour market policies. An example of a question utilised in interviews is: "What is the reason for choosing the strategy *you have selected for providing services? Could you have chosen another form of strategy?*". The participants in the interviews were asked to develop and clarify upcoming concepts or thoughts relevant to the study's subject (Bryman, 2018: 561). This increases the trust in the analysis and clarifies possible ambiguities. In the analysis, examples of central aspects of the interviews were provided by quotes from the interviewees so that the reader could see part of the data.

3.3.2-Questionnaire survey:

The style of the quantitative research method is different to the qualitative method. In the quantitative method, numbers and statistics in the form of numerical are used to measure specific aspects of the studied phenomena (King et al.: 1994). The questionnaire survey aims to quantitatively describe the work environment and labour market secretaries' role in providing to the target group. Trost and Hultåker (2016) explain that a survey is a tool to measure human

behaviour and opinion and how many people think or act in a certain way. Alongside qualitative data from interviews, a questionnaire offers the opportunity to look for statistically significant trends and patterns. The advantages of the survey as a method are to reach a bigger population of the respondents more quickly and easily than what a semi-structured interview method allows. However, a questionnaire will likely produce less in-depth answers and prevent the researcher from asking follow-up questions and having unexpected information.

The measurement is done through categories of (independent) variables related to the street-level bureaucrats' work environment in implementing labour market policies. These independent variables are discretion, meaningfulness, willingness, documentation requirement, clarity of responsibilities, resources and opportunity to influence the policy. The purpose of this measuring the results from the questionaries study is to determine in which direction the variables affect each other and how independent variables affect the implementation of labour market policies (dependent). This had been made easier by having mainly close-ended questions (Fowler, 1995:69-93). Closed questions allow the respondents to give a more reliable answer when the question is well designed. Even the research can be more secure on what respondents mean with the provided answers. And it is not time-consuming to respond to closed-ended questions, which can give a higher response rate (Bryman et al., 2021; Fowler, 1995:69-93). In addition to close-ended questions, an open-ended question with an opportunity to freely write an eventual reflection about the work environment related to labour market policies is asked.

The survey method to obtain information from each labour market secretary is a self-administered web survey developed through Webropol. In a Self-administered web survey, the respondents receive a login to the web page through email. The respondents log in to the web page, read the questions, and answer. The answers will be registered in the data survey (Bryman, 2016: 221; Statistiska centralbyrån, 2016:204). The link to the questionnaire survey includes an introduction mail sent to all participants. According to Bryman (2018: 290), an introduction mail should describe the aim of the study and why the respondents were chosen for the study. Therefore, the introduction text includes an information about that the survey being designed for a master's thesis and its aim – in broad terms – to understand the implementation process of labour market policy in Lund municipality.

Finally, conclusions are drawn by comparing the answers on various issues and finding the pattern in the answers. The survey is then used to describe the variables of the labour market policy's implementation process, which help to answer the research questions.

3.3.3-Operationalising

A variable includes information about a person, attitudes, or how the respondents view and understand the studied subject (Barmark and Djurfeldt, 2015:35). The latest one, how the respondents view and understand the implementation process, is what the questionnaire survey in this study wants to measure.

In total, eleven questions were asked in the survey, where the first ten questions were obligatory, and the last question was optional. The two first questions are background variables, and the next eight questions measure the LMC working environment and the implementation process. Finally, the last question gives the opportunity to respondents to elaborate on a related issue to their works environment and the implementation. The rationale behind a small number of questions is to not lose the interest and focus of respondents in answering questions and having a high rate of answers. A high rate of the answer is important to keep information from survey representatives reliable due to a small number of respondents. In order to receive feedback, the questionnaire is tested once before the actual survey by a development strategist working at the social department of Lund municipality, who is familiar with the job of LMC.

Furthermore, the questions are formulated as statements in the second part of the questionnaire. These series of statements together form item measurement; the results from each item measure the respondents preceptive about that item. The answers alternatives are designed based on a Likert numerical scale from 1-5 to measure the degree of agreement with a series of statements, where value (1) means not correct at all (Stämmer inte alls), and value (5) means completely correct (Stämmer helt) (Bryman, 2016: 227-228 and 692). The answer options are designed logically, where the lowest value means barriers in the implementation process from a bottom-up perspective. Since it indicates a low level of discretion, lack of meaningfulness of the work, poor communication with managers, being excluded from policy formulation and a high level of documentation requirement. In contrast, a high score overall means a good implementation opportunity from a button-up perspective.

Discretion: Statements 3 and 4 measure the discretion of LMC at their work. The highest value means (5) a high level of discretion for the respondent, and the lowest value (1) means that the respondent experiences a lack of discretion in decision making.

Meaningfulness: The meaningfulness of the work is measured by statements 5 and 6. Low meaningfulness of the work is presented by the value 1, and value 5 presents a high rate of meaningfulness of the work for LMC.

Resources: Statement 7 aims to measure resources that is needed to achieve the goals in the policy. The lowest value (1) indicates a lack of resources for carrying out services to achieve the goals, and the highest value 5 mean that resource is good for achieving these goals in the policy.

Clarity of responsibilities: The clarity of responsibilities is analysed by statement 8. A low level of clarity in the responsibilities is presented by the lowest value (1), and a good interaction level is presented by the highest value (5).

Documentation: Statement 9 measures the documentation and reporting requirements. Here, the value 1 means a high requirement for the documentation and reporting for the LMC, and the value 5 means a low level of reporting requirement which does not interfere with the original work of the LMC.

Influence: Statement 10 is designed to measure the influence of LMC on formulating the municipality's labour market policy. The highest value (5) in each question means a high opportunity for LMC to influence the policy formulation, and the lowest value in each question means low influence on policy formulation.

It is worthy to mentation that the results from both the questionnaire survey and the interviews are analysed under the presented items. Another item that is not measured in the questionnaire survey directly but analysed in this thesis is collaboration. However, the opportunity to comment freely in the question 12 allows respondents to express their views on the item of collaboration.

3..3.4-Sampling and response

The questionnaire surveys sampling frame comprised of 17 welfare workers who are working as labour market coulters at Lund's municipality. The sample for the survey consisted of all labour

market secretaries in Lund municipality. They are directly content with clients and are so-called "street-level bureaucrats '. Although this group consisted of a small number of respondents, it was considered an important source of needed information for the study.

Using an email and two reminders, we received 12 answers to our questionnaire, i.e. a 71 per cent response. The respondents' ages ranged from 30 to +60 years. The work experience ranged from 1 to +9 years as LMC or social secretary, moreover the majority (42%) had worked between 3 to 6 years.

3.4-Linking research question to method and theory

The link between research questions, method and theories had been explained in the previous chapters. In table 3.4.1, I describe the method and theory that had been used to answer each research question more explicitly. Furthermore, even the statements and questions in the questionnaire survey and interviews related to each research question and theory are mentioned. I have developed the items in the research based on the theories and previous research and in table 3.4.1, items developed from theories are mentioned. The main goal of the interviews had been to gain relevant information from a top-down perspective, in the same time interviews with the top managers had been necessary in order to answer the first research question. All of the interviewees had been involved in the formulation and management of the policy of the labour market.

Table 3.4.1 Research question, and used theory and method to answer the question					
Research question	**Theory**	**Method**	**Item**	**Statements** (questionnaire survey)	**Questions** (Interviews)
1	-Top-down -Previous research	-Qualitative (Interview)	-Policy formulation -Collaboration		(3,4,7, 11,13,14)
2	-SLB -Top-down -previous research	-Qualitative (Interviews) -Quantitative (Questionnaire survey)	- Discretion - Meaningfulness -Resources -Clarity of responsibilities -Documentation -Influence on policy formation	(3,4) (5,6) (7) (8) (9) (10)	(6,7,8,9,11,12,15,16)

3.5-Ethical considerations and Delimitations

Reflection on possible implications and consequences caused by the researcher's values and biases is important in academic work (Bryman, 2012: 393). Objectivity in interviews, formulating questions in the survey, and translating and analysing them was a key aspect that guided the work in this study. Ethical issues had been a paramount concern in this study, especially given that the study is exploring the participant's work structure. Two different information emails were designed to make participants aware of the aim of the studies, one for LMC and another for managers. In the information mail to LMC, they were informed about the freedom to participate and that they would be anonym. For the purpose of anonymity, the name of survey participants was not mentioned in the study, and the gender question was deleted. This decision was made to increase the anonymity protection of participants; thus, only a few males worked as LMC. But participants

in the interview were allowed to be anonymous if it was requested by them. All four participants in the interviews accepted to be recorded and the material used for this study.

A number of delimiting choices had been made for this master thesis. Choosing to interview managers that had been in different hierarchical position in Lund municipality had been one of them. The reasoning behind this was to be able to bring in a wider managemental preceptive on the implementation process of employment service. As managers in different hierarchical levels may interpret the implementation different due to their kind responsibility and involvement in managing of the services. But the personal experiences may vary between different managers even if they are in the same hierarchical level. For a more extensive study, a number of managers that manage the LMC work directly could be interviewed to gather more personal experiences of managers working directly with the LMC.

Another delimitation was to not interview LMC. In an early stage of this study, a choice had to be made between on one hand keeping the LMC totally annoying, even from myself as a researcher. Or on the other hand, network and find LMC that could be willing to answer questions about the management, their discretion and the meaningfulness of their work in an interview. The choice fell on the anonymous questionnaire survey, as it was deemed to most readily capture the true personal experiences of LMC on the subjects that had been curial to implementation.

3.6-Validity & reliability

The validity, among other things, means a fair terms-validity. Terms validity indicates an absence of systematically mistakes and fair accordance between theoretical definition and operationalising methods (Esaiasson et.al, 2017: 58–62). The definition of central terms in this thesis, as implementation analysis, decentralisation and SLB, to name some, describes in the introduction chapter and chapter of the theoretical framework before the analysis. Moreover, case studies provide careful examinations of categories of items within a complex process. As has been previously discussed, Lipsky and Sabatier, which are at the core of the analysis of the material presented in this thesis, are not formulated as being only theories in the field. Using previous studies in the field of labour market policies and the public sector have prompted the broader ground to examine the material.

The reliability, or in another word the transparency of the study increases through a description method for gathering the data and operationalising methods of the theories on the those gathered data. Furthermore, as the interaction between managers and LMC is, among other things, that is examined to answer to the second research question in this thesis, using interviews and the survey give an explanation on this interaction.

Finally, as it had been discussed earlier (See 3.3.1-Interviews and 3.3.2-Questionnaire survey), it is important that the questions are designed in a way, both in the interviews and questionnaire survey, that the respondents understand them. In the interviews, this was ensured through follow-up discussions. In the questionnaires, the respondents were given the opportunity to expand on their answers in their own words or add additional comments about the implementation of Lund municipality's employment services.

4- Analysis

> "There is always resistance when you do new things in itself. No matter what
> kind of changes you implement, there is always questions for everyone about
> implementation." (Ann-Charlott Johansson, interview 2022-04-26)

In an attempt to understand the possible *"resistance"* and answer to the *"questions... about implementation"*, an analysis of the questionnaire survey and interviews is presented in this chapter. This chapter contains the results and the analysis of the gathered material from this study. It begins with an overview of the questionnaire survey's results. Furthermore, analysis takes place in five categories; firstly discretion, meaningfulness, resources, then documentation requirement, clarity of responsibility, finally influences on policy formation, and collaboration. Results for each category is discussed through the lenses of theories and previous studies. The chapter ends with a presentation of pooled results of data from interviews and questionnaire survey. Before diving into the chapter, its useful to remind oneself of the studies research questions:

1-What is the municipality's focus and intended outcomes regarding their labour market policies in Lund? And what motivates the municipality's involvement?
2- How efficient are the interactions between managers and street-level in the existing work environment regarding implementing the new unemployment services?

4.1-The respond of the questionnaire survey

The result from data presented in the following is separated into the seven under-categories or items presented in earlier section. This deviation is to see if there are differences between the items by comparing the responses to the respective question. The questionnaire survey was sent to 17 labour market consulters in Lund municipality. After two reminding mails, the total response went up to 12 from 17 (See Table 4.1). The response rate is more than 70 percent which is an acceptable rate for a treat the data as representative of the group of LMCs in Lund municipality.

The background variables show that 84 per cent of the LMC has worked in labour market-related jobs for three or more years, which indicates that most of LMC are well experienced in the field.

Table 4.1- Follow-up Statistics	Number	Precent
Individuals' recipient total	17	100%
Answered	12	71%
Not answered	5	29%

4.2- The Discretion

Discretion is one of the important aspects of SLB theory. Indeed, the discretion in the SLB's daily work means that they can make decisions based on their perceptions and assessment. Like as Lipsky (1980) introduced, the discretion gives street-level bureaucrats the ability to formulate the organisation's operational model and determine the quality and nature of the services provided (Ibid:14). The presented results in the following table (Table 4.2.1 and 4.2.2) indicate an amount of discretion which is "good enough", but still limited by the routines and guidelines. These guidelines and routines frame the manoeuvre space of LMC in designing and adapting their work in a way they assess are the best for achieving goals of department and for the induvial clients.

Statement:" *The routines and the design of the guidelines allow me to work in the way that I believe is best for achieving set goals*

Table 4.2.1	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
not correct at all	0,0%	0,0%	41,7%	50,0%	8,3%	completely correct	3,7	4,0

Statement*: "Guidelines and routines allow me to adapt the working method to the needs of clinicians"*

Tabel 4.2.2	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
not correct at all	0,0%	8,3%	41,7%	50,0%	0,0%	completely correct	3,4	3,5

As Figures 1 and 2 suggest, 50 per cent of the responding LMC referred that they believe that the routines and guidelines allow them to adopt the method in a way they think is the best. This is although approximately 41% stated that the level of ability to adapt the work are not that high. The contentment with the discretion should be presented in contrast, almost half of the respondents stated that they thought that the routines and guidelines do limit the discretion in a certain manner – which cannot either mean that they do not have discretion. Only 8% of respondents answered differently in tables 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, each indicating a different degree of discretion. In table 4.2.1, this 8% claimed that statement was correct by choosing the highest value possible. The 8% of respondents in table 4.2.2 choose value 2, indicating a low discretion level caused by guidelines and routines that limited the autonomy of LMCs. Despite this, discretion has indeed been described as good.

> "After all, labour market consultants still have the room for action when it comes to choosing together with the individual the planning towards self-sufficiency". (Jessica Persdotter, Interview 2022-04-13)

> "They (LMC) choose completely independently what they want, how they set up the conversation with team meetings depending on the client's needs."(Ann-Charlott Johansson, interview 2022-04-26)

In the response from the managers, it becomes clear that the LMC has some "discretion" when it comes to the detailed planning with the clients, in the framework of the methods that are set to achieve the department's goals. For example, Jessica Persdotter and Ann-Charlott Johansson claimed in the citation above that the LMC has the freedom to choose the methods of planning, conversation, and meeting.

> "I can understand that, on the one hand, people think that the routines are detailed, and we have pointed to activities that we follow in particular and that

we think should be used. It is because we have set the goals that we have set

for the labour market." (Jessica Persdotter, Interview 2022-04-13)

" We work based rule-based department. We set the framework around what

you will do and what goals will be achieved. Then when it comes to How. If

you choose to have a coaching meeting, or if you choose to have an

investigative meeting? If you choose to be a little tougher in one prosecution

and a little following in another? Taking it there, we have the confidence that

you, as a labour market consultant or social secretary, can, of course, have that

assessment yourself because you are the one who knows the client." (Ann-

Charlott Johansson, interview 2022-04-26)

However, the discretion of LMC is limited by the detailed routines, as the citations above indicates. The director of the social department has pointed out activation and some other methods, to be used in the implementation of services. These pointed methods and tools put a frame on discretion and the ability of LMCs to adapt the services to the individual needs of each client. LMC's discretion depends on the requirements and routines placed in the institutional environment. The institutional environment could be the routines, guidelines, and managers' decisions. The LMCs can only manage and adapt their daily work at a limited scope.

4.3- Meaningfulness

Meaningfulness is described as one on the dimension for a successful policy implementation (Lipsky, 2010). The following tables shows the meaningfulness of work and departments goals from LMC preceptive.

Statement: *"I experience that my work leads to meaningful effects for my clinics, for example, that people get a labour market job, internship or start studying."*

Tabel 4.3.1	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
Not correct at all	0,0 %	0,0 %	8,3%	41,7%	50,0%	completely correct	4,4	4,5

Statement: *"It is important to me that the department's goals within the labour market strategy are achieved."*

Tabel 4.3.2	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
Not important at all	0,0%	16,7%	16,7%	33,3%	33,3%	Very important	3,8	4,0

As acknowledged in table 4.3.1 a substantial number of LMCs have answered that their work has meaningful results for the clients. This was apparent in the responses to the questionnaire, as more than 90% meant that the statement was either correct or completely correct. The statement here indicates that the work of LMCs has meaning for the clients receiving these services. Tummers and Bekkers (2014) found a positive effect between street-level bureaucrats' discretion and their perception of services meaningfulness for the clients.

Thus, with more discretion, it would be more meaningful to get the SLB to do their job and have the effective result. Street-level bureaucrats' willingness to implement the policy improve when they see their work as meaningful for their clients. As in Table 4.3.2 displays, the view on the importance of achieving the department's goals is more spared than achieving the expected result for clients, as shown in the previous table. As the following comment shows, the meaningfulness of the work for clients becomes less when the attention is given to the cost-saving and efficiency in the department.

"I experience that we are, all in a lesser extent, starting from what the clients need and rather focus on "making it more efficient". Which is not effective, especially not in the long run." (Respondents, Questionnaire survey)

The focus on the effectivization and quantitative goals overshadow the quality of the given service to the clients, which can indicate a conflict between the cost-saving and departments goals in a quantitative manner, with the quality of services to each client and its result in the long term.

"My experience is that we measure the wrong things and sometimes focus more on quantitative goals than on what would be best for the client." (Respondents, Questionnaire survey)

More particularly, the organization of labour market policies is described with the help of two ideal models of reward and punishment by Dahlberg et al. (2013), Nybom (2014), and Thorén (2014). The job activation model is often linked to municipal activation reminiscent of poor care. It is characterized by control and sanctions instruments to increase job-seeking activities and discourage income support or finding work before the activation action is started. The resource activation model, the reward model, emphasizes education and work experience from the regular labour market and is usually associated with state activation to facilitate the establishment of the labour market where sanctions and control have a subordinate role.

In line with the item of meaningfulness, one could suspect that the LMCs are more concerned and prioritize the achievement of meaningful results for their clients, rather than the abstract goals of the department. But as it appears in table 4.3.2, more than 66% responded that the department's goals are important to them. At the same time, one could assume that LMCs with a strong stand for meaningfulness toward the clients would not pay the same amount of attention to departments' goals. However, the result for clients are included in the department's goals and is important part of it. The following citation from Jessica Persdotter, the deputy director at Lund municipality, states that the focus of services to unemployed individuals has changed through the implementation of the new policies. This change of focus was discussed in all four interviews, and it was regarded as a changing point for the meaning of services from only economic support to guidance to self-sufficiency.

"Less focus on subsistence support and more focus on the road to self-sufficiency, i.e., questions about self-sufficiency" (Jessica Persdotter, Interview 2022-04-13)

4.4- Resources & Documentation requirement

The lack of resources, such as staff and time to implement the policies, can be an obstacle for street-level bureaucrats and prevent the highest performance efficiency (Lipsky, 1980:29-31). In order to structure the implementation process sufficiently, in terms of financial and personal administrative resources, it is necessary to address the target group, monitor compliance, and

increase the capacity to comply (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1980: 545). The following citation indicates the importance of tracing resources:

> "We are constantly measuring how far we can go with existing resources and what we need more to be able to complete the mission. It's like we're building at the same time as we're developing." (Jessica Persdotter, Interview 2022-04-13)

Statement: *"I believe that the current resources, in the form of, for example, staff and time, lead to achieving the set goals within the labour market strategy.*

Tabel 4.4.1	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
Not correct at all	0,0%	8,3%	41,7%	33,3%	16,7%	completely correct	3,6	3,5

Given the result from the Tabel 4.4.1, more than 41% of respondents indicate that the recourse was partly enough to achieve those goals that are set by the department leading team. But more than 30% of respondents agreed that the resources were enough, and about 16% meant that it was completely enough to achieve the goals set. However, the average is 3,6 indicate that LMCs do not fully see the current recourse to achieve the goals. The additional tasks of LMC, such as documentation, can interfere with the main work and make achieving the desired goals difficult. Therefore, the following question was asked in the questionary. Comments from LMCs emphasised a mismatch between methods and instruments used in services with clients' needs. As the comments indicate, the mismatch and changes in methods for cost-saving undermine the chance to archive those desired goals within the labour market policy.

> "I feel that sometimes the tools that have worked have been removed....."
> (Respondents, questionnaire survey 2022)

> "The risk for a failure depends very much on whether we do not receive more money in form budget for the labour market interventions but go back to more basic activities" (Ann-Charlott Johansson, Interview 2022-04-26)

The organisation of labour market services within the social deferment of Lund municipality does mean the risk for these services to be cut back in the time of budget shortage. According to Bergström (2014), a common element in this type of organisation means that the labour market policies represent an area that may be left behind, mainly because activation is not a regulated responsibility for the municipalities. As the citation above shows, this risk can also be the case for Lund's labour market policies when there is demand for savings. A return to more basic activities means a cut on the labour market policies in different ways due to regulated parts of the social services as financial assistance being prioritised. But also, the street-level bureaucrats' experiences and skills are crucial for implementing policies and, therefore, can be seen as a resource element for implementation. Lack of experience in training and the right competence might result in difficulties in the implementation process (Lipsky, 1980:29-31). In the interview with the unit manager, Ann-Charlott, the existing experiences in the group of LMCs appear to be good. Most of LMC did have long working experience in a related work position to employment services. Also, the results from the study's survey show that 84 % of the LMC have worked in labour market-related jobs for three or more years. These kinds of experiences, according to her, allowed LMCs to understand the work holistically.

> "It is good that they have long experience; a lot of them have been social workers in the past and can familiarise themselves with those parts." (Ann-Charlott Johansson, interview 2022-04-26)

Measuring the level of documentation required is one way to understand how controlled the organisation in the public sector is. The documentation requirement means that the street-level bureaucrats must report to regulatory agencies and document their work (Lipsky, 1980: 4, 13-14). The result in table 4.4.2, shows how the LMCs experience the documentation level and thereby control them.

Statement: *"The requirements for documentation and administration of the work do NOT interfere with the main work to a significant degree*

4.4.2	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
Not correct at all	0,0%	8,3%	16,7%	33,3%	41,7%	Completely correct	4,1	4,0

The majority of the respondents of the questionnaire agree that documentation demand does not interrupt their daily work. As Tabel 4.4.2 indicate, more than 70 % meant that the requirements for the documentation and administration of the work do not interfere with the main work. However, about 20% meant that the documentation and administration partly interfere with the main practical work.

"They document because it is about client work. They document the work they do together with the client. The documentation takes place from a legal point of view but also for its own sake. To know what it I did what we decided. What will happen next time?" (Ann-Charlott Johansson, Interview 2022-04-26)

"It is a requirement that we deliver what we do. It is a very important part of this to give feedback and report back constantly. It is about accountability towards politicians and the public" (Jesssica Persdotter, Interview 2022-04-13)

Respondents stated that the management does measure their work through the documentation requirement. But in the interviews with the leading managers, the reasons behind the documenting requirements were stated to be the rule-based function of the social debarment and the requirement to report back to the politicians and the public. Another reason for the documentation is said to be the tracing the process in the services and being able to follow up the services to the next steps.

4.5- Clarity of responsibility and Influence on policy formation

The following tables show the LMC's perception of the clarity of the tasks and their experience on influencing the policy-making. In addition, the material from the interviews has been used.

Statement: *"It is clear which tasks I am responsible for*

Tabel4.5.1	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
Not correct at all	0,0%	0,0%	25,0%	41,7%	33,3%	completely correct	4,1	4,0

The result from Tabel 4.5.1 indicates that 75% of respondents consider the share of responsibility clear enough or completely clear. On one side, this 75% know what they are responsible for and what is expected from them to deliver. On the other side, they also know what their responsibility and work is not. However, 25% of respondents have said that the responsibility is just partly clear. This shows that the routines and guidelines may need to be further developed to make the responsibility clearer than what table 4.5.1 suggest. The following comment on the limited clarity of working tasks and management shows that working with clients' needs more support than what is provided through the labour market services. Furthermore, the management is not as clear as it should have been in the leading, and also in the managing routines and services, so it matches clients' needs.

"Unclear target group, considerably more factors need to be taken into account than the fact that a person is unemployed. Unclear management, political goals are not always in line with what is best for the clients" (respondents, Questionnaire survey 2022)

One of the core aspects of all four interviews was that the needs of clients and the method became clearer when a process mapping took place about the municipality's unemployment services. As stated in the following citation from Pia Forsberg, the secretary at the development unit, the labour market policy started first when the process mapping was done. Another aspect of this citation is the role and influence of LMC in determining the future labour market policy by describing their work.

"We started everything by doing a process mapping of current self-sufficiency. The employees had the opportunity to describe how they worked from the first step to the end and then based on this; we moved forward" (Pia Forsberg, Interview 2022-04-09).

Another distinct claim made by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980: 542) is that the greater the public and political support for the policy, the lesser the potential for conflict and opposition. The political support from the local politician was described as strong in the interview with Johan Larsson, the vice director of the social department. This strong support seems to have sent signals

to other departments to collaborate with the social department to achieve the policy's goals. But another political decision that made the position of the social department stronger in carrying out the policies was the moving of the responsibility of coordinating labour market policies from the city council (Kommunsstyrelse) in Lund to the council of the social department. This change of platform brought the labour market policies into the agenda and clarified which part of the municipality had the responsibility.

> "Previously, the municipal board coordinated responsibility for the labour market area. But responsibility for coordination of labour market area in the municipality was simply shifted to the social board which made the issue bigger issue now than before" (Johan Larsson. Interview 2022-04-01)

Statement: *"There are various recurring occasions for me to discuss the content of routines, guidelines, and our way of working with managers"*

4.5.2	1	2	3	4	5		Average	Median
Not correct at all	0,0%	8,4%	33,3%	8,3%	50,0%	Completely correct	4,0	4,5

Table 4.5.2 look into the opportunity for the LMCs to influence the formation of labour market policy. The suggestion in this table is that if the LMCs can discuss the content of routines, guidelines, and the way of working with the management team, they would have the opportunity to influence the policy formulation. As the results from the table suggest, almost 60 per cent of the LMCs experienced that they do have the opportunity to discuss the policy and thereby influence it. But 40 % of respondents see less chance to influence policy formulation. This 40 % has responded that they have partly or to a limited degree of the repetitive accessions to discuss the policy with the management team. Several comments from LMCs indicate that the influence of LMCs in policymaking is limited. As the comments below show, the management does not implement those changes that are asked for by the LMCs even if these changes are discussed between the LMCs and managers.

"... There ARE opportunities, but I don't feel that the management is making the changes that are requested anyway... "(Respondents, Questionnaire survey 2022)

In the interview with Jessica Persdotter and Ann-Charlott Johansson, units meetings were described as a standard process for LMCs to discuss different aspects related to employment services. As stated in the fallowing citation, meeting in different forums is seen as the way for LMC to discuss and thereby influence the employment services.

"Partly through a labour market consultant's meeting that we have every week and then through team meetings and another forum called cross-groups" (Jesssica Persdotter, Interview 2022-04-13)

Pia Forsberg, who has an active role in the policy development and not in the management, described the opportunity for the team member to influence the lobur market policy as good. According to the following citation from her, she had been able to influence the policy by giving new ideas about collaboration with a Work-Integrating Social enterprise (WISE). The leading had accepted the idea after a careful assessment.

"The idea of WISE that I have helped to develop has, after discussions with leading, become part of the labour market strategy." (Pia Forsberg, Interview 2022-04-09).

The belief in the top-down model is mainly that the decision-maker can manage the implementation process. Decision-makers and managers can, by using the available management methods, govern and control the process of implementation, which happens vertically (Sabatier, 1993:268). In the interview with Ann-Charlott Johansson, the opportunity for influencing the using method and policy was described as limited. The reason was that the method had already been chosen carefully, and its well-tested methods are evidence-based. The evidence and well-tested method don't leave that much space for the LMC to determine which method could be used in employment service.

"LMC is not involved in determining which methods are used or not. Because these methods are widely proven because we use evidence-based methods....

the Director of the social department is very keen that we use these methods

for those who have the need."(Ann-Charlott Johansson, Interview 2022-04-26)

High-ranking employees and managers have more ability to influence the policy formulation and direction of labour market policy. One example is the case of WISE, where a high-ranking team member of the development unit greatly influenced the idea. Even in the interview with Ann-Charlott Johansson and Jessica Persdotter, the role of high-ranking managers seems to give them more opportunity to influence policies' direction. As stated in the citation from Ann-charlotte, the used method is supported by the director of the social department, which makes it more likely for those methods to be used in the work of LMC. One could argue that the politicians and high-ranking official managers are the actors deciding the implementation direction. The street-level bureaucrats, the LMK, then exercise the higher-ranking official's decisions (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979: 489-92, 503-4). However, this opportunity was limited by the routines and methods that high-ranking officials had decided about.

4.6-The Collaboration:

The collaboration between the municipality and the SPES, and within different departments of municipality had been a common subject during interviews with the managers. The role of collaboration with SPES in implementing local labour market policies has been discussed in earlier studies (Danermark, 2005; Lundin, 2008; Panican and Ulmestig, 2021). The funded result here is generally similar to the discussions in those studies. The local government's resource limitation emphasizes municipalities' need to collaborate with SPES and other actors. The collaboration with the SPES became important due to the SPES regulated obligation in the labour market policies (Ibid). However, in the case of collaboration between the municipality and SPES, the absence of SPES at the local level in Lund municipality caused problems in the collaboration (See the citation below). These challenges in the collaboration were presented as one of the main reasons behind the municipality's progress in labour market activities. An article by Jacobsson, Hollertz nd Garsten (2017) argues that the cooperation structure of that municipalities in activation policies differs, which indicates that collaboration between SPES and municipalities is negotiated in a local context. As Johan Larsson and Ann-Charlott Johansson described in following meanings, the changes in the SPESs organisation, caused by a political decision at the national level, had led to

the absence of SPES at the local level in Lund which made Lund municipality to take a step into the employment services and fill the gap caused by SPES absence .

"We had cooperated much more around the individual with SPES. But when SPES reorganised, and there was a political discussion, all of a sudden, we had no employment agency to work with. Hence, it was almost necessary for us to build up somehow an organisation to be able to provide the efforts because the Employment Service somehow disappeared" (Johan Larsson. Interview 2022-04-01)

"The employment service from SPES hasn't existed for many years and I think they would have been as this regardless of our organisation form, unfortunately. And it has caused a great concern. This is why we as a municipality have to start increasing our labour market efforts again because the role of the Employment Service has become smaller" (Ann-Charlott Johansson, Interview 2022-04-26)

One of the crucial aspects of employment policy, is the collaboration between municipality and the relevant actors in the local context, where the SPES is a natural partner because of its central role in the labour market (Panican and Ulmestig, 2017). This collaboration is missing in the case of Lund. Interviewees did point out benefits of the collaboration between the SPES and municipalities. However, this collaboration is challenged by the reform that SPES faces. And thereby, the municipality become the responsible actor in the local context to carry out responses to a problem that is described as complex. According to the citation above, Lund municipality took the responsibility for the organisation of the municipal employment services when the collaboration process with the SPES didn't exist anymore in the municipality. The services were organised mainly based on the social department's current organizational capacity, but a search for other possible actors to collaborate with was ongoing. In the interview with Pia Forsberg, she meant that the municipality had decided to at least start a collaboration with one WISE in Lund within the employment services.

"We have a goal to eventually prepare an opportunity for at least one WISE to become a partner for Lund municipality in the labour market services. A

WISE, similar to Yalla Trappan, where the opportunity for employment of several can be possible. There is huge interest from the different actors for participating in this collaboration with the municipality" (Pia Forsberg, Interview 2022-04-9)

This initiative from Lund municipality to start a partnership with a work-integrating social company follows the logic funded in the study by Lundin and Skedinger (2000), which shows that municipal involvement results mostly in more local initiatives. Apart from that, a mismatch between the degree of decentralisation and the authority responsible for carrying out the places can negatively affect the implementation of these policies; here, it can be argued that the absence of SPES in providing and planning the unemployment services can mean that the municipality did not have as much recourse and capacity in carrying out these services in a more holistic way. With holistic it means the kind of services that also that is given to the individuals with coordinated planning and not it being done by each actor separately during a short period of time.

"We will work with them for a shorter period and release them when they receive planning thought AF. This leads to the contact being short-lived, and they have moved around and have to tell the same things to several different people." (Respondents, Questionnaire survey 2022)

In the interview with Jessica Persdotter (See citation below), the challenge of having a functional collaboration with other actors with the same interest and goals in the labour market was discussed. She meant that the discussion about the collaborations is ongoing with different actors. Still, when it comes to implementing collaboration, which does not depend on the key individuals, the collaboration meets challenges.

"It is very easy to talk about collaboration, and we should, but then when it comes to having collaboration, the hardest thing is to get it on functions and not on people." (Jesssica Persdotter, Interview 2022-04-13)

But choosing to use the current organisation model also meant that Lund municipality choose to not use the other models. The other models, such as developing an independent and new department of labor market services, as in other municipalities in the region, would mean an

expansion of bureaucracy, which follows the NPM ideology presented by Patrik Hall (2012;28). However, the collaboration around the services within and outside the organization, with SPES or privet actors, indicates NPM. The idea of Lund municipalities networking with other relevant actors, SPES and WISEs that share the same goals to deal with the problem of unemployment is the central part of NPM (Lindberg 2009:5). The problem of unemployment is described as complex by the LMC and managers that need a more holistic input than what the municipality can provide. Therefore, the involvement of the other relevant actors such as SPES, privet WISE and the public ensures services are needed to overcome the complexity of the problem.

> "We felt that we had such collaboration within the current administration's
> structures to be able to cope with this task without making an organisational
> change that would take a long time, as it takes many resources." (Johan
> Larsson. Interview 2022-04-01)

As cited above, the challenges of collaboration with the municipality in implementing the employment policies had been overcome due to a clear political message and support from the high-ranked officials. A good collaboration with the other departments within the municipality had not been the case from the start of employment services, especially for municipal employees for the clients. Moreover, the existing structure in the municipality had been seen to be functional enough to achieve the goals of the labor market policy. As the citation above indicates, the current organization structure has been able to cope with the policies and deliver the goals. But even a change in the organization would require resources in terms of time and money, which is not the most effective way.

The responsibility of carrying out the collaboration with other departments, such as Service or Health care, was given to the managers. The LMC and social secretary didn't seem to have the capacity and resources to establish such collaboration with other departments on the SLB level. Thereby managers had the task of keeping up with the policy and ensuring this collaboration with other departments would work as needed.

> "We try to hold the stick to the policies. LMC or social s secretary couldn't do
> that much. We didn't get the resources required from other departments in the
> municipality. It is a management task to make the strategy possible." (Johan
> Larsson. Interview 2022-04-01)

One of the main aspects that had put obstacle into implementing of policies to achieve the goals was to have been the Covid-pandemic. Specially in collaboration with the healthcare department. The surrounding circumstances affect Lund municipality's ability to prepare collaboration and services for providing the needed services for clients.

> "WE had the pandemic as part of our concern, especially when it was about working with the healthcare department but also the other departments" (Ann-Charlott Johansson, Interview 2022-04-26)

5- Results

Implementation, in general, can be defined as an early phase of a policy in the public sector (Hill and Hupe,2014); the implementation phase begins when a decision that is made to establish a new policy in the sector. The nature of the employment services requires a collaboration between the municipality and the SPES; due to SPES regularised function concerning the employment services. From all interviews, it can be concluded that there are some uncertainties about the responsibility sharing and the forum for collaboration. This is in line with the statement from Hall (2012) that networking in the public sector can lead to coordination problems, where there can be uncertainties on the responsibility. Furthermore, the responses in the interviews could also be seen as they wish for a more coordinated collaboration with the SPES at a local level, despite the changes in the SPES organisation. The reason could be that those institutional settings in the labour market policies affect the clients' results. Institutional setting is central in the implementation of a policy because it can determine which directions that policy can take; by carrying out the burden of transforming general decided policy into an array of routines and social processes (O'Toole, 2003:2).

Another point that all interviewees describe similarly, is how important collaboration within different departments of the municipality and with relevant actors, particularly SPES is for achieving results. One can argue that collaboration had been seen as a response to the complexity of the problem. Implementation processes are complex, and this complexity can result in failure of policy (Hill and Hupe, 2014). Furthermore, moving the responsibility to the board of social department had clarified which department is responsible for carrying out the services and thereby smaller risk for conflict or confusion on which department should coordinate the services. While the dominant view in interviews and questionnaire surveys has been positive, there has been an indication for a risk of the services not being as meaningful as they should be for the clients in the long term.

Questionnaire respondets concluded that the LMC have some discretion in their work and can influence the formulation of policies. The services are meaningful for the individuals receiving them, and the services themself can in some degree be adapted to the client's needs. Furthermore, the documentation requirement exists, but it doesn't interrupt the main tasks. In other words, the

working environment for the LMC from an SLB preceptive is good enough for a functional implementation, even if it may not assume to be the ideal one. Moreover, there were indications of challenges in the implementation that respondents to the questionnaire highlighted. The rules and routines limited the discretion of the LMC in the place, and the influence didn't seem to be that effective. Based on this, one could, as Tony Evans (2011), divide the LMC into two groups. The first group see guidelines and routines in policy as a tool to expand their autonomy and have meaningfulness for their work. The other group perceive the guidelines and documentation as a limitation of their autonomy. Street-level bureaucrats' work meets some paradoxically in the aspect of discretion. On the one hand, the individual cases in their work require some freedom in the decision making, but on the other hand, the rules shape their work to reach the policy's objectives. A number of the respondents by the comments explained that there is a conflict between the political goals and the methods in place, with what they think is best for the clients and their work. Following Lipsky's (2010) perspective, we can divide the work of labour market consulters into three parts. Where the first part includes the organisation's laws and guidelines. The work of LMC is according to interviews and questionnaire survey is based on the clear guidelines and rules that frame the work and responsibilities. The second part includes the client's expectations and the interaction with LMC. The responses here have been mostly positive, but some challenges, as the LMC presents a shortage of time for interaction with each client. The last part emphasises the LMC frame for maneuverer. Routines, guidelines and existing methods set this frame for LMCs decision-marking.

Another aspect that could be noted from the responses to the questionnaire survey was that no one choose the lowest value for the statements asked. The median in all statements had been from 3,4 to 4,5 with the highest value of 5 and the lowest value of 1. As the average value in the different states, the questionnaire survey was in the middle as the lowest; one could argue that respondents do not believe that the implementation process is a failure. However, the relatively low average value for the element of discretion (See Tabel 4.1.1 and 4.1.2) indicates a risk from the SLB preceptive for successful implementation of policies. Discretion, coping mechanism, and willingness had seen to be the key dimensions for successful street-level policy implementation (Lipsky, 2010). Therefore, following the low value on the discretion aspect, the statement on the resource received an average of 3,6 out of 5 (See table 4.4.1). The next aspect that receive an average results under the 4 , 3,8 from 5 (See Tabel 4.3.2) is the statement on the meaningfulness

of archiving the department's goals for LMC. This can be seen in contrast to the high average value for the previous table on the meaningfulness of LMC's work for the clients, that is 4,5 from 5 (See Tabel 4-3-1).

From a top-down perspective, the following criteria are required for successful implementation; a) Clear and consistent objectives, b) Suitable for regulation and policy purposes, c) Implementing process legally structured to enhance compliance by implementing officials and target groups, d) Committed and skilful implementing officials (ibid). As has been addressed, the objective of the labour market policies was described to be clear in all interviews, and the result from questionnaire agree with that (See Table 4.5.1). According to interviews, the implementation of the labour market policies had a huge amount of support from different political parties. The structure of services was argued in interviews to be designed for LMC to interact with the clients in a legal and documented way. Finally, the LMC were seen as a resource for the policy being implemented because of their work experiences as LMC and social secretary , which gives them the skills needed to have a holistic perspective on the client's needs.

6-Discussion and conclusion

The implementation of the labour market policies in Lund municipality is what this thesis has sought to explore. Indeed, the data has been collected through a questionnaire survey that was sent to 17 LMC in Lund municipality and from interviews with four managers in different positions related to managing of employment services in the municipality. To guide the material toward an answer, Lipsky (1980) and Sabatier's theory (1980) on the implementation process has been used, with an ambition to analyse the implementation of services and develop the theory. The findings have resulted in several conclusions.

In the previous chapter, seven items in the implementation process were analysed. These items are the discretion of LMC, the meaningfulness of policies and services for LMC, resources of the department to manage the implementation, documentation and the reporting requirements for LMC, clarity of responsibility for LMC, and finally collaboration between the organisation responsible for carrying out the employment service with other actors. These seven items have been developed as a result both SLB perspectives from Lipsky (2010) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), and the previous studies on the implementation of employment services and collaboration (See section 2.6 Previous studies). In general, most of these seven items can be confirmed through the gathered material, to be functioning in Lunds municipality.

Furthermore, both the interviewees and the questionnaire respondents agreed that some challenges were faced at work. Not only because of a lack of optimal discretion and the needed resources, but also because other aspects such as the documentation requirement that interrupt the main tasks. The challenges in collaboration with other important actors, mainly SPES were also seen as an obstacle. On the one hand, one could argue that as a result of these challenges, the implementation process of Lunds municipality's employment services would be a failure of the policy. However, on the other hand, the results from the questionnaire respondents and interviewees lent to a mostly positive view, which indicates that these challenges are obstacles but are not causing a failure in the implementation process. Also, the policy of employment services was described to be in its early stages which is in line with Hill and Hupe (2014) definition of the implementation process, as an early phase of a process in the public sector. It worthy to mention that the line between the implementation process of employment services and other stage is not as

clear as what Hill and Hupe (2014) state. Modification of methods and routines is a constant ongoing process in the employment services.

The view pursued by the managers versus LMC on the labour market policies varied to some extent. Given the gathered material, managers saw their role as the coordinator in the networking, putting milestones for achieving goals, and having a strategical overview of the work. Networking, both horizontal to other departments and vertical to the higher-ranking managers and politicians, seemed to be an important task for the implementation of policies. Consequently, that could indicate that the structure of policy has not been institutionalised in the way that Sabatier (1980) meant that the structured processes are necessary for successful implementation, and still depends on key individuals. Managers in the Social Department of Lund have clear responsibility for developing process of implementing and coordinating the environment on which the employment services depend. The lesson that could be learned here from an active role of manager is that the newly started policies require more active management until they had been institutionalised in the organisation. When the social department and other involved departments in the Lund municipality have a more shaped network and working process, then the work can be delegated to the lower level of hierarchy. The explanation given for this in the interviews had been a lack of tools and legitimacy for LMC to network with other departments and have a holistic perspective on the political decision, resources, and time.

The strategy model and organisational structure of policies had been an active choice by the high-ranking managers according to the presented results. However, one could argue that the form of organising the employment services under the social department would mean a risk for the services to be overshow by the main function of the social department. As Bergström (2014) argued, in a time of resource limitation, a comeback to the more basic activities of the social department, which is financial assistance, is likely. An aspect that affects the choice of option for the organisation form is the support from the politician and the public for the employment services. Given the interviews result, this support is found to be high. Moreover, another result from interviews indicates that the managers believe that the current organisational structure can deliver the goals in the policy, and a change in the organisational structure requires too much time and resources.

As an answer to the first study's question "*What is the municipality's focus and intended outcomes regarding their labour market policies in Lund? And what motivates the municipality's involvement?*" The following can be said: The focus of unemployment services is on the clients' self-sufficiency through different methods such as subsidised time-limited jobs, internships and studies. These services are intended to reach a higher employment rate and thereby decrease the number of households receiving economic support from Lund municipality. Here the documentation and reporting back to the higher ranking official and politicians became necessary to trac outcomes, but it is also essential for the future planning, budget and organising of the services. According to material from interviewees, the number and the needs of clients change over time; therefore new methods are needed as responses to new kinds of needs. The motivation behind the municipality's involvement, as it had been discussed in the previous chapter, had mainly two aspects; the first and most important one was the changes in SPES organisation which led to closing their local office in Lund therefore a weaker collaboration with Lund municipality. Another reason had been an increase in the number of households that were receiving financial support which meant higher costs for the municipality. This increase in the number of households was argued to be partly because of an increase in the number of immigrants in Lund municipality

The second research question, *"How efficient are the interactions between managers and street-level in the existing work environment regarding implementing the new unemployment services?* Has been discussed in the previous chapters. As a more direct answer to the question, by using the theories, one could argue that the interaction of managers and LMC in the implementation process seemed to mostly be in line with what Lipsky (1980) called SLB implementation perspective. The statements that were tested had for the most part given high value. As the theory of SLB indicates, discretion is the main aspect of successful implementation. But guidelines, rules, routines, and methods are also necessary for clarity in the responsibility sharing, and the involvement of managers may be needed when the implementation process is on the development process and not institutionalised yet.

The documentation demand is also described as an obstacle in the work of LMC. Still, due to the nature of the work being with vulnerable clients and for tracing the stage of services it could be a tool for implementing process. The process can by documentation be legally structured to enhance compliance by implementing officials and target group (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980:

542). The indication of both SLB theory and Top-down theory have been seen in the management of the implementation of employment services in Lunds municipality. The mixed variables of both theoretical standpoints do not mean weakness in the implementation process. They show that implementation in the public sector is a complex process that needs a more holistic perspective to be analysed. As it was stated earlier, a more active role of the manager indicates a top-down perspective that can be needed to establish the institution in which policy is implemented within. Simultaneously, the work of LMC requires some amount of discretion, which is an element of SLB, to adapt the work to the needs of each client. Both of these elements had been existing in the case of Lund municipality employment services.

6.1-Limitations and Further Research

In the following section, I first discuss the limitation of this study. Where it is possible, some proposals for future research that may tackle some of the limitations in these studies, as well as future studies that could departer from finding in this study.

All methods have their limitations and strength (King, 1994). Throughout this study, I have considered the explicit limitation of the used method and carefully addressed them. The participants in interviews were asked about their own decisions and their current work, which can mean a risk of bias in their answers. Therefore, the gathered data from interviews were treated carefully and somewhat sceptical. Furthermore, the questions were designed not to be a burden for the respondent more than necessary, as well as that the answers are meaningful for respondents and they feel that they have been given a true picture (Statistics Sweden , 2016: 204). Each item in the questionary survey was formed based on the theory and reviewed by one of the employees in the social department to ensure that they measured the relevant aspect for answering the research question. The measurement logic of those items was explained in detail in operationalising section. The analysis focused on describing the current implementation process in the Lunds municipality's employment services, not anticipating how the outcome would be in the future. That means, the surrounding political views on the employment services and environmental factors such as the current economic situation or the upcoming election in Sweden have not been emphasised.

Consequently, it would be interesting to include the surrounding aspects in the analysis for further studies. After all, implementing employment services does not happen in vacuum space and can be affected by the surrounding environment. Including such material would allow the researcher to understand better and highlight the circumstances around the implementation process and could by mixing with implementation analysis of the organisation have a more holistic understanding of the implementation process of services.

The small number of respondents to the questionnaire survey could be seen as an important limitation in the method of this study. Due to few numbers of LMC working in the Lund municipality, the questionnaire was only sent to 17 respondents, from which 12 LMC responded to the questions. However, the response rate has been 71%, 12 respondents out of 17 LMC, of what could have been possible in the case of Lund. Furthermore, as both the survey and interviews were constructed and conducted in Swedish, the translation to English can be seen as problematic. In order to deal with this challenge, specifically in the material from interviews, the direct quote was translated by putting more attention to the aim of the essence of it and not specific words. The same is done while translating the comments from the survey, which needed less amount of adjustment, due to them being written.

Another limitation in the method can be argued to be a more profound perspective of LMC through interviews. The questionnaire survey in this thesis has been designed to allow the LMC to comment for a more expanded response, resulting in some comments and explanations. However, due to the limited time and scope some choices to limit the theories and methods were made to make the study possible. But future studies may use other theories or methods to study the same case to contribute to understanding the implementation process of Lund municipality from other standpoints. Using a mixed method and gathering the data through the interviews and questionnaire survey with the manager and LMC offers a more accurate and nuanced material. The hope is that the combination of different theoretical standpoints, previous studies, and mixed methods inspire further studies to have new ways of case studies.

Finally, using different theoretical frameworks may have given different structures and perspectives to the data analysis, which could result in other conclusions. For example, a feminist perspective would have shaped the studies' direction on the aspect of equality. However, I find that the use of the implementation theories, street-level bureaucrats and top-down, are relevant to the

aim of the study and its character. It allows the study to focus on one case and use a mix-mode to gather necessary data for contexts of decentralisation and local government implementation of labour market policies. As mentioned in chapter 1 (The study's aim and research question) generalising has not been the core of this study, even if some generalisations in limited scope had been drowned. This generalisation should be interpreted carefully. Thus, that implies more work must be done before one can confidently argue for the extensive generalizability of results.

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7-Appendix 1 – Questionnaire Survey

Implemtering av arbetsmarknadpolicyn

1.Hur gammal är du? *
20-30 år
30-40 å
40-50 år
+50

2. Hur många år har du arbetat som arbetsmarknadkonsulenter
(arbetsmarknadssekreterare) ? *
0-5 år
5-10 år
10-15 år
+ 15 år

3. Rutinerna och riktlinjernas utformning tillåter mig att arbeta på det sättet som jag själv
bedömer är bäst för att uppnå uppsatta mål.
 *
Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

4. Riktlinjer och runtiner tillåter mig att anpassa arbetsättet efter kliners behov.
 *
Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

5. Jag upplever att mitt arbete leder till meningsfulla effekter för mina klienter, exempelvis att personer får en arbetsmarknadsanställning, praktikplats eller börjar studera.

Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

6 Det är viktigt för mig att verksamhetens mål inom arbetmarknads strategin nås.
 *

Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

7. Jag anser att de nuvarande resurserna, i form av exempelvis personal och tid, leder till att uppnå de uppsatta målen inom arbetmarknads strategin
 *

Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

8. Det är tydligt vilka arbetsuppgifter jag ansvarar för.

Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

9. Kraven på dokumentation och administration av arbetet stör INTE det huvudsakliga arbetet i väsentlig grad

 Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

10. Det finns olika återkommande tillfällen för mig att diskutera innehållet i rutiner, riktlinjer, och vårt arbetssätt med ledningen.
 *
Stämmer inte alls
1
2
3
4
5
Stämmer helt

11. Du är välkommen att lämna övriga synpunkter kring din arbetsmiljö i relation till implemtering av arbetsmarknadsinsatserna.

8-Appendix 2 – Interview Questions

1. Hur länge har du varit i din position?

2. Har du tidigare arbetat som arbetsmarknads / social sekreterare?

3. Finns det tydliga målsättningar med arbetsmarknads insatserna, isåfall vilka är dem?

4. Vad är bakgrunden till arbetsmarknadsinsatser i kommunen och anledning till att det är just de målsättningar ni har valt och inte andra?

5. Har du varit med att ta fram handlingsplanen?

6.Vad anser du att är viktigast i din roll, när det kommer till implementering?

7. Vad motiverade dig att ta en sådan detaljerad handlingsplan ? (om det är detaljerat)

8. Vad ser du för möjligheter med riktlinjer och handlingsplan för AMS?

9. Vad ser du för barriärer i implementeringen av handlingsplan?

10. Kan du jämföra tiden innan och efter 2020, när policyn började gälla?

11. Har policyn ändrat sättet ni jobbar med försörjningstagare?

12-Vad är några av organization problem som AMS i förvaltningen stött på?

13. Vad tror du har lett till de här problemen?

14. Har problemen förändrats med tiden?

15. Hur ser du på rollen som arbetsgivaren har när det kommer till att ansvara för medarbetarnas resultat och arbetssätt?

16. Har du inkluderat LMC åsikter om organisatorisk implementering av arbetsmarknadsinsatser och i så fall hur?

17. Finns det något annat du vill utveckla kring?